alleviation while registering a healthy growth rate among the other South Asian Countries as per the report of the World Bank revealed in the publication "Annual Bank Conference on Development of Economics, 2003";

(b) if so, whether according to the report about 40 per cent of the world's poor are in south region;

(c) if so, whether the World Bank has agreed to provide all necessary assistance to the country to further reduce the poverty; and

(d) if so, the aid the World Bank has agreed to provide to the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) The World Bank has reported that the book "Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics 2003" edited by Sadiq Ahmed and Suman Bery is not an official publication of the World Bank, but an edited volume of individual contributions to this conference published by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). In the introduction to the volume by the editors there is a statement "South Asia has made solid progress in poverty reduction in the 1990s, based on a strong growth performance. The growth impetus and poverty impact were most notable in India." The same introduction states that 40 per cent of the World's poor live in South Asia.

(c) and (d) The World Banks' Country Assistance Strategy for India seeks to scale up assistance to the Government of India to reduce poverty.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Varanasi as heritage city

†2006. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to include Varanasi in heritage city category; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) (a) No, Sir. There is no provision in the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules 1959, for notifying heritage cities.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Does not arise.

Renovation of Temples and Heritage Sites in Orissa

2007. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to protect identity of Orissa State culture by way of renovation of its historical temples and other sites of heritage character; and

(b) if so, the details of such heritage centres that have been renovated and others that would be taken up in a phased manner?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Archaeological Survey of India conserved and protects 78 monuments/ sites in Orissa which comprise historical temples and other sites of heritage character. The conservation of protected monuments is a continuous process. The maintenance and repair work of these monuments are being taken up on a regular basis.

Impact of Tsunami on historical monuments

†2008. SHRI T.S. BAJWA:
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the historical monuments have lost their existence due to Tsunami and several precious relics have been unearthed;

(b) if so, whether Government are going to construct their replicate at those places;

(c) the number of monuments of historical importance that have been damaged as a result of Tsunami; and

(d) the steps taken by Government for their revival?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir. None of the historical monuments protected by the Archaeological Survey of India has lost their existence due to Tsunami and no such relics have been unearthed.

(b) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.